

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING

**January 12, 2010
Town Room, Town Hall**

MINUTES

Members Present: Ruth Hazzard, Jaime Tidlund, Pat Wagner, Touria Eaton, Pauline Lannon, Sally Fitz, and Richard Roznoy (Non- Voting Planning Board Rep)

Minutes

Minutes of the December 8, 2009 meeting unanimously approved as amended.

Regional Agricultural Commission Events

Ruth will pass on a copy of the newsletter with the meeting dates. The January 19th meeting is about energy grants.

Farmer Database

Sally reported that she had six or seven databases sent to her, which have prompted more questions, rather than giving her answers. She compiled some thoughts about how to get it all to work. She also received some older survey results which she feels will be useful to see how we can address farmer needs. The survey results were distributed and reviewed. Her thought was to try and take all the information received and compile the list of farmers and make the list as inclusive as possible, then weed through the additional information later.

Farmer Gatherings

The Agricultural Commission began trying to figure ways to get local farmers together to meet and talk. Not only to get to know one another, but also to try to see what needs other farms may have, such as equipment repairs and to share other information and ideas. Also just knowing that they are not alone and that many other farmers are facing the same struggles.

Some meeting themes were discussed such as what people might need, legislation, labor and exploring ways in which the Farm Bureau can help farmers. There was some talk that maybe having a breakfast meeting several times a year at a local restaurant such as Kelly's instead of the annual Farmer Forum may work better; people may feel more comfortable in a familiar setting. There was also talk about trying to go farm to farm to get some one on one time with the farmers to get a good sense of what their individual needs are.

It was thought that as an Agricultural Commission we need to look to grow and be proactive. Sally will work on the email list and Pat will talk to Steve at Kelly's about possible dates and times to have a meeting at his place. Ruth will draft the invitation to send out.

The Agricultural Commission than briefly discussed ways that this would benefit farmers and how it would create a network and make people feel more together. We felt as though some sort of reply should go out after the meeting, letting everyone know what went on and what they missed. We would try to make it catchy in hopes of having more people attend the next meeting.

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION MEETING

January 12, 2010

Page 2 of 2

Meadow Street

The Agricultural Commission discussed the last Planning Board hearing and agreed it would be a good next step to meet with Larry Shaffer to discuss the possible alternatives for the property on Meadow Street.

CPAC

There is a farm on East Pleasant Street the Town is trying to buy for recreational purposes. We need to find out more about this, what farm it is and find out why nobody on the Agricultural Commission knows about this.

Forever Ban

Sally was concerned that this was something that may have an impact on her serving on the Agricultural Commission, because it could impact her and her farm in the future; it was determined that we are exempt from this because we will always have a conflict of interest.

Respectively submitted,
Jaime Tidlund